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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3410
INFO RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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UNCLAS JAKARTA 001612

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR CA, EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP, EAP/PD,
CA/VO/L/C

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL CVIS KISL KPAO ID

SUBJECT: VISA CLEARANCE NEEDED FOR NOTED INDONESIAN SCHOLAR

¶1. (U) This message is Sensitive but Unclassified; Please see Action Request in para 5.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Mission requests the Department's urgent assistance in resolving visa clearance for a distinguished Indonesian scholar who hopes to travel to Northern Illinois University to receive an award for distinguished alumni. Indonesian President Yudhoyono has also asked Dr. Baswedan to join the President's meeting with U.S. scholars in Boston this weekend. Dr. Baswedan, a friend of the U.S. and personally known by the Ambassador, is a well-known moderate Muslim who may be named Indonesia's next Minister of Education. "Foreign Policy" recently named him as one of the top 100 public intellectuals in the world. If his visa clearance continues to be held up, it will prove a serious embarrassment for the U.S. END SUMMARY.

URGENT ASSISTANCE NEEDED

¶3. (SBU) Mission requests the Department's urgent assistance in securing interagency SOA resolution for Dr. Baswedan, Anies Rasyid (Indonesian passport number B461837, DOB 07-May-1969) to travel to Dekalb, Illinois, in order to receive a distinguished alumni award from Northern Illinois University. Indonesian President Yudhoyono has also asked Dr. Baswedan to join the President's meeting with U.S. scholars in Boston this weekend. With plans to depart Jakarta on September 26, Dr. Baswedan intends to stay in the United States for four days. Mission understands that his namecheck resulted in a 00 hit and therefore a SAO Donkey was submitted for him.

INDONESIA'S MOST PROMINENT MODERATE MUSLIM

¶4. (SBU) As one of Indonesia's best and brightest intellectuals, Mr. Baswedan was the main speaker at a recent Iftar (breaking fast) event hosted by the Ambassador at the EMR. He is rector of the prestigious Paramadina University in Jakarta. He has traveled repeatedly to the United States, most recently in 2007 on a J-1 visa. He is a Fulbright alumnus and serves on the Fulbright Commission here in Jakarta. In April 2008, he was named by "Foreign Policy" magazine as one of the top 100 public intellectuals in the world. He has also been mentioned as being the next Minister of Education. Baswedan is friendly to the U.S., both in private and in public remarks.

NEED FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

¶5. (SBU) Jakarta/CONS has already requested expedited clearance by email to CA/VO/L/C which further explained the importance of Dr. Baswedan in furthering U.S. foreign policy objectives in Indonesia. Mission seeks a response to this request as quickly as possible. Without immediate action

that results in Dr. Baswedan's visa clearance, this is a crisis foretold, and will prove to be a serious embarrassment for the U.S. and damaging to our interests.

HUME